

## Springfield Elks Lodge 1560 Presents Exalted Ruler Awards

Springfield Elks Lodge #1560's Exalted Ruler, Richard Lucius, presented three prestigious awards during his last lodge meeting on March 23, 2026. These awards are presented annually to Elks members who have shown exemplary service within the lodge and the community.

### Elks of the Year – Heather Olsen

This award recognizes a member who has shown exceptional devotion, dedication, and loyalty to our Lodge. This was not an easy decision, as we are fortunate to have many deserving members. However, Heather Olsen stood out for stepping forward answering the call without hesitation during a particularly challenging time, when our House Committee faced a period of transition and uncertainty. Under her guidance, working alongside PER Carolee Murchie as her co-chair, the committee regained stability and had a successful year. What makes this even more remarkable is that Heather did all of this while facing serious health challenges within her own household. Her strength, commitment and willingness to serve despite those circumstances exemplify the very spirit of Elkdom.



*Heather Olsen with ER Richard Lucius*



*Raymond Buisson with ER Richard Lucius*

### Officer of the Year – Raymond Buisson

This honor is given to a current officer who has gone beyond in service, leadership, and commitment to the Lodge. In sports, there is a term for someone who can step into any role when needed, a “utility player.” That is exactly how I would describe this individual. Throughout the year, no matter the event or the need, this person was always there—reliably, consistently, and without hesitation. As Exalted Ruler, I had the opportunity to attend many events at our Lodge, and repeatedly, I would look around and see this individual there as well, supporting the Lodge and its mission.

Whenever help was needed—by me, the House Committee, or any member—this person was always the first to step forward. We are honored to recognize Ray Buisson as the officer of the year. Ray is a Past Exalted Ruler, Past State President, Honorary Life Member, and currently serves as Inner Guard. His continued dedication and tireless service are an inspiration to us all.



*Mike & Shannon Holl*

### Citizen of the Year – Mike & Shannon Holl

This award honors two outstanding members of our community and serves to strengthen the relationships that make our Lodge and our town so special. In this case, Michael and Shannon Holl are not only valued members of our community, but also members of our Lodge. We recognize their incredible support throughout the year, especially their leadership and energy in our membership drive and Super Bowl party. The results speak for themselves, with many of our newest members joining thanks to their efforts. Their generosity, including the donation of a 100-inch television, reflects their commitment to this Lodge and its future.